

NORTH HOSPITAL NEIGHBORHOOD MEETING NOTES - April 1, 2009



On April 1, 2009 the City of Auburn Planning and Community Development (PCD) Committee and City staff met with residents of the North Hospital Neighborhood at City Hall, 25 West Main Street, to discuss neighborhood concerns.

PCD (PLANNING & COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT) Committee Members in Attendance: CHAIR LYNN NORMAN, NANCY BACKUS AND RICH WAGNER

Staff in Attendance: COMMUNITY SERVICES MANAGER DUANNA RICHARDS, COMMUNITY SERVICES PROJECT ASSISTANT KIRSTEN REYNOLDS, POLICE COMMANDER OF ADMIN. SERVICES STEVE STOCKER, TRANSPORTATION PLANNER CHRIS HANKINS, TRANSPORTATION PLANNER JOE WELSH, PLANNING DIRECTOR CINDY BAKER, SENIOR PLANNER STACEY BORLAND, PRINCIPAL PLANNER ELIZABETH CHAMBERLAIN, EMERGENCY PREPAREDNESS MANAGER SARAH MILLER, PARKS PLANNING & DEVELOPMENT MGR. BOB WUOTILA, SOLID WASTE CUSTOMER CARE KATHLEEN EDMAN AND CODE ENFORCEMENT OFFICER MIKE DUNBAR

Community Members in Attendance: JEFF WAYLAND, VALERIE V STALEY, ROGER AND KAREN GULLIVER, TARAZ FRENCH, KRISTI NEWMAN, CHERYL AND SHAWN RAKES, DORIS DEISSLER, KRISTOPHER KITZ, RICHARD BENNETT, HOWARD MCOMBER SR., FAYE BAILEY, PATRICIA CRANDALL, RAFELINE MCMULLEN, LAURA MCBAL, TIME AND MARTHA PARKER, DENNIS HEFNER, CARL RHODES, RONALD WALLACE SR., CURTIS AND SHARON SMITH, DAVID COMSTOCK, DEB AND DAN MAGUIRE, BOB AND DONNA MCLAIN AND DON AND STEVE SMALL

Welcome and Introductions

Chair of the Planning & Community Development (PCD) Committee, Lynn Norman, called the meeting to order and welcomed everyone, thanking them for attending. Chair Norman explained that Mayor Pete Lewis regretfully could not attend this meeting.

City staff was asked to introduce themselves before the meeting began. Community members were asked to identify themselves by name and give their address for the record. The primary purpose of tonight's meeting was to give residents information regarding a potential Hospital Overlay Project, listen to the residents' concerns, respond to questions they could answer immediately and identify items for follow up.

Planning Presentation

- The Planning, Building & Community Director, Cindy Baker, gave a quick introduction to the Healthcare District Overlay project. Planning staff and PCD Members have been reviewing options of capitalizing on the hospital as a catalyst for healthcare development.

The purpose of the Healthcare District Overlay project is to do what's best for the neighborhood and City. Staff is currently reviewing the possibly of establishing this special zoning district which would allow additional specific healthcare related uses with flexible development standards while maintaining existing uses; another option would focus specifically on healthcare uses for property redevelopment. Other cities that have established a healthcare overview including Denver, Seattle, Portland and Salem.

In the presentation the PCD Committee asked to hear from the community members living and working in the neighborhood what they would like to see for the area 10-20 years from now. Staff reassured the audience that everything presented tonight will be up for discussion; ultimately the Auburn City Council will be making the decision after hearing

feedback from community members. Staff reminded the audience that existing land uses will remain the same if regulations are modified under the proposed Healthcare District, until a change is made to the property; owners/businesses would absolutely NOT have to move or be forced out.

Several areas discussed further in the PowerPoint presentation included, but were not limited to:

1. Review of current land uses in neighborhood which there is 45 single family residences and 19 businesses.
2. Evaluation of preserving the neighborhood character which includes several historic places, notable buildings and larger yards.
3. Evaluation of parking and possible solutions to alleviate the lack of parking problem.
4. Reviewing businesses as valuable resources in the neighborhood.

Current allowed uses include: single family residences and accessory structures, duplexes (3600 sf lots), multifamily dwellings (2400 sf lot area), art and photography studios, banks (excluding drive-ins), computer sales, home-based daycares and professional offices. Current conditional uses include: civic, social and fraternal clubs, daycare, pre-school, nursery school, government facilities, nursing homes, personal service shops (hair salon), religious institutions and restaurants (excluding drive-in).

- ***What are the next steps for this Healthcare District Overlay project?***

Staff will compile and review feedback from the surveys, formulate a more defined proposal and take proposal back to the PCD Committee for discussion; there may be additional follow up meetings with the community, there will definitely be future opportunities for the community to give more input.

General Q&A from the presentation

- ***Will the City be fixing the sidewalks?***

Pat Crandall, resident at 409 B Street, expressed this neighborhood has some of the worst sidewalks in the City. Staff explained there are a couple different options that could be done. The City can work with the neighborhood to get special funding for improved sidewalks, but it will require working together.

- ***What is happening with the truck route/corridor?***

Karen Gulliver, resident at 522 A Street NE, expressed concerns with the truck traffic cutting through the neighborhood. The trucks are driving up A Street that is mainly residential, many families and young children live on this street.

Committee Member Rich Wagner talked about the A Street corridor. The road is planned to reach from 15th Street to the new Hospital parking garage. The City has already received funding to complete the project from 3rd Street then north to the SHAG complex. It will still be several years before A Street is completed all the way to 15th Street. The section between Mohawk Plastics to 10th Street will be started and completed in 2010.

- ***How is the neighborhood going to be preserved if more businesses come in?***

With more businesses in the neighborhood there will be fewer eyes on the street to prevent criminal activity in the area. Staff replied that currently business are allowed in the neighborhood, this is why the City wants to hear from the neighbors regarding what type and how development should happen.

- ***Will existing power lines around the neighborhood be buried underground?***
Sharon Smith, resident at 410 B Street NE, asked if the existing power lines could be buried like they've done in other neighborhoods; she explained they were tired of seeing them in their yard. Staff responded that cities and developers are responsible for paying for this. Because it is extremely expensive it's highly unlikely this will be done.
- ***How will parking permit stickers work?***
If the neighborhood decides they want to hear more about this the PCD Committee is willing to host more community meetings to discuss how this should be implemented. Transportation Planner, Chris Hankins, briefly talked about several things happening in the Public Works Department, including, but not limited to, the Transportation Comp. Plan which is currently being updated and a new partnership with Sound Transit for shuttle service to the transit station. Transportation Planner Joe Welsh talked about the importance of sidewalks and the ability to walk throughout the neighborhood.

Member Wagner also mentioned the importance of hearing back from residents' interest in the parking permits! Please give the City your feedback. There would be some costs associated on the City's part. If you had a permit system how would you like it to work?

Parking and Post Office issues:

- Transportation Planner, Chris Hankins, talked about the community survey questions that asked residents to describe how they felt about the current parking situation. It is very important that residents get their surveys in by the April 10th deadline to ensure an accurate evaluation of the survey.
- ***Will the parking garage being built by the hospital be available for the Post Office or public use?***
Steve Small owner of business at 112 3rd NW, inquired about public use of the new parking garage. The COA will have a specific amount of reserved parking; it was mentioned the parking garage would also be open to the public.

Resident Pat Crandall explained postal workers parking in the neighborhood has been an on-going problem. Has the City discussed options with the Post Office about parking once A Street is built? Yes, the City has been talking with the Post Office and will continue to have conversations until something is worked out.

Don McLain, resident at 310 A Street NE, asked if the City has been working on moving the Post Office to a new location because the current location is not a good at all. This is an on-going conversation and a very controversial issue the City is dealing with. There is always a challenge to keep up with the need for increased parking. Funding has been approved to build a second parking garage at the Sound Transit Station.

- ***Where will the cars be parking when further development happens?***
Debbie McGuire, resident at 325 B Street NE, explained there is no parking in the neighborhood now. These issues will be addressed if/when future development happens; staff explained that every time a new permit is submitted staff will carefully review and indicate necessary improvements that are required. Any new development that may come into the neighborhood for redevelopment would be required to provide on-site parking to be determined by the City by the type of business activity is generated.

Kristi Newman, resident at 513 A Street NE, reported neighbors have been receiving parking tickets for parking their vehicles on the street for more than 72 hours. This is still a residential neighborhood and they feel that they shouldn't have to deal with tickets when parking in front of their own home.

Richard Bennett, resident at 107 West Main Street, reported there are 35 apartment units where he lives and they only have five parking spaces total. His issue was there isn't enough parking in the neighborhood.

Public Safety Related Questions/Comments

Police Commander of Admin. Services, Steve Stocker talked about when to call 9-1-1, Auburn's new graffiti program being developed, Block Watch and National Night Out.

- ***If you have a problem or see anything suspicious call 9-1-1!***

Residents were encouraged to report everything to 9-1-1. We, the citizens of Auburn, own the 9-1-1 system in partnership with other South King County cities. You should call 9-1-1 whenever you have an emergency, feel something suspicious is going on, need to speak with an officer or file a report. (An online reporting system is also available at http://www.auburnwa.gov/police/online_reporting.asp if you would prefer to file your report that way.) **PLEASE NOTE:** If calling from a cell phone you need to ask for an "Auburn Call Receiver."

When you call 9-1-1 it will be answered by a "Call Receiver." The Call Receiver will determine whether or not your call is an emergency to be handled right away or to have an officer make contact with you to file a non-emergency report. If you want to know what the officer finds out be sure to let the Call Receiver know you DO want to be contacted by the officer when they've completed their investigation.

In addition to emergency issues, residents should also call 9-1-1 for non-emergency issues such as street lights out, stop lights out, missing stop signs, fireworks, loose dogs, sewer backups, water leaks, etc. An alternative is to report them via the City website. The link is under Online Services at the top of the page and is called Online Citizen Report: http://www.auburnwa.gov/Business/Contracting_Consulting/Online_Citizen_Report.asp

- ***Problems with Graffiti?***

Property owners and neighborhoods repetitively struggle with this issue. City Code required property owners to remove graffiti within 15 days; a new Graffiti Removal Assistance Program was created in partnership with Parker Paint to help property owners take action. If neighborhoods are having graffiti problems they should call the City's Code Enforcement Division to report the problem (253-931-3090), the officer will open a case and call your information into Parker Paint. Residents can go to the Parker Paint in Auburn and pick up supplies to cover the graffiti.

Commander Stocker reported the Police Department has been documenting pictures of graffiti to help identify who is responsible. They have also been using graffiti cameras as deterrents.

- ***Can youth caught doing graffiti be sentenced to clean it up?***

Once caught the individuals are charged; if convicted only the Judge can sentence they to do this type of community service.

Curtis Smith, resident at 410 B Street NE, spoke about harsh penalties on the residents/victims who get their property vandalized. The City does understand that the residents are victims and are working to change the program to best help. Chair Lynn Norman talked about the new Ordinance Council passed that gives 15 days to get graffiti removed.

- ***Block Watch Presentation***

Block Watch is built on the concept of neighbors watching out for each other because you know better than anyone else who belongs in your neighborhood and who doesn't. If you think "maybe I should call 9-1-1 about this," you should. Residents were encouraged to set up a Block Watch; once the group is formed Community Programs Officer Andy Gould will come out to do the formal training on what to watch for, how to react and how to get neighborhood participation.

- ***National Night Out***

This is an annual event where neighbors get together to promote a crime free community; the 2009 date is Tuesday August 4th; it's a chance to engage with neighbors and/or Block Watch groups. If residents are interested City Councilmembers and the Mayor will come to visit registered block parties.

Disaster Preparedness

- Emergency Preparedness Manager Sarah Miller gave a brief presentation regarding how the Block Watch program has been combined with the Map Your Neighborhood program (MYN). The MYN program helps to get neighbors together and meet with purpose; neighbors are taught how to get prepared before an emergency happens as a neighborhood; residents do some hands on mapping of skills and resources that are readily available in their own neighborhood.

Citizens can also participate in a FREE CERT (Citizen Emergency Response Team) training to prepare their homes, families and neighborhoods in case of an emergency; this is an eight week class series where first aid, triage and survival skills are taught.

- ***What's been happening at the Howard Hanson Dam?***

Ms. Miller explained after the 2009 winter storms engineers from the Corps found a depression on one of the banks along side the dam. When they put water and dye into the depressions it showed up in the Green River on the other side of the dam. They've since dropped the level of the pond to its lowest level possible to still allow water to come through. The Corps said they cannot raise the level of the reservoir as they have done before until they know what caused the problem and have figured out how to fix it; they need to find the money to fix it which could take 2-4 years if it is an 'easy' fix.

The Howard Hanson Dam was built to control flooding from the Green River. If a tremendous amount of rain comes 15th Street and north will flood however, even if your located outside the flood zone there are still possibilities that basements and low spots in yards/streets could flood and roads may be blocked; all residents were advised to get flood insurance. The City is preparing for the recovery stage and has been working with the surrounding jurisdictions in preparation.

Resident Valerie Staley asked about the storm system replacement plan. Staff from Public Works will respond to this resident about her question.

Community Services Presentation

- Community Services Manager, Duanna Richards, explained the new Community Services Division is the liaison between the City and community members; the Community Services team is focused on getting information out to the community and can help anyone who has questions but doesn't know who to talk to at the City. One way the City communicates with residents is through the Mayor's weekly updates.
 - **Mayor's Update** -- residents were encouraged to sign up for the Mayor's Update, an e-newsletter Mayor Lewis sends out every Friday about what's taken place in the City during the week, upcoming events, etc. He also uses the listserv to send out alerts about road closures, emergencies, etc. as a way to keep the community informed. Since this is a listserv, if you decide you don't want to continue receiving it you can unsubscribe at any time.

Other ways that communication happens is through utility billings; this is a joint effort between many of the City departments to collaborate and consolidate their messages into a small flyer that gets sent with the bill. The Community Calendars also hold good information and events planned around the City. We also give out the Public Service Directory, which is available in English, Spanish and Russian; it holds a lot of local contact information.

Summary of Solutions Discussed/Action Items

In closing, Chair Norman talked about the importance of getting the surveys in to staff so that their views and suggestions will be heard by the Committee. There will be efforts to work with the neighborhood for further follow up and implementation.

Chair Norman announced that City Council approved a new prescription drug program for people who don't have adequate insurance coverage. This new program will give residents of Auburn a 10% prescription savings card. Information is available on-line or feel free to contact Community Services Division to get more information on this program.

1. Public Works to contact Valerie Staley about storm system replacement for neighborhood.
2. Public Works staff to work with residents on options to upgrade the sidewalks throughout the neighborhood.
3. Next steps for project are staff to compile and review feedback from the surveys, formulate a more defined proposal and take proposal back to the PCD Committee for discussion.

UPDATE ON RESIDENT SURVEY: TOTAL SURVEYS MAILED OUT = 191 TOTAL RESPONSE RECEIVED BACK = 16

1. *Would you support more healthcare businesses such as medical offices locating in this area?*

Question 1 Results: Yes = 9, No = 6, No response = 1

2. *Would you prefer to see more professional offices (attorney and real estate) or medical?*

Question 2 Results: Yes = 7, No = 5, No response = 4

3. *What do you think about taller medical buildings coming in to this area?*

Question 3 Results: Yes = 8, No = 5, No response = 3

Question 3 Response:

- Good idea.
- In downtown maybe, but not in residential.
- Then parking would become a problem.
- I have no objection.
- You got to be kidding, at what price to the people.

4. If sidewalk improvements could be done in this neighborhood where would you like to see them?

Question 4 Results: Response = 11, No response = 5

Question 4 Response:

- If I have to pay then I don't want them.
- No response to this question.
- "B" Street.
- Throughout.
- Repair sidewalks east and west sides of B St. NE.
- Where they need them.
- We do not have a sidewalk, I would like one but I don't want a financial impact. (Also don't want to lose driveway).
- We have good sidewalks.
- There are a few areas where the sidewalk stops, which could be finished up. What we need is a crosswalk across 3rd NE at A St NE or B St NE. Pedestrians do not walk down to the crosswalk at the Post Office to get to the hospital or to med buildings on south side of 3rd NE. Part of the sidewalk on B St. NE is crumbling badly, which could become dangerous.
- On the streets where no sidewalks now. Too many people walk in streets from 5th Street NE and end of streets.

5. How do you feel about the current parking situation in your neighborhood?

Question 5 Results: Response = 13, No response = 3

Question 5 Response:

- Post Office employees surround my corner property all day every day.
- Ok as is.
- Annoying.
- No response to this question.
- It's overcrowded with patients & office workers, Post Office.
- I don't like it.
- Local businesses have been complaining about our residential parking during the day. For those of us who work at night, part time or disabled are tired of getting tickets.
- Postal and hospital employees use all available parking.
- It's terrible-can't park & bring in my groceries.
- I don't worry about cars parked on the street. Most are gone in the evening. But...I have a driveway. Not everyone does.
- Until hospital and Post Office provide adequate employee parking there will not be a solution; on-street parking is all there is.
- It is awful on my neighborhood as workers park on every parking space. No where for visitors to park for us. I have a driveway. Kept my car in garage so have parking in driveway. Lots of neighbors have no driveway.
- Inadequate!
- We have learned to deal with it. Postal workers park on our street, no problem. It's not their fault the government/city can't provide parking for them. But the way things are now is not a big problem. For those of us that work, by the time we get home, the postal people are gone. As far as the city goes, "If it's not broke, don't fix it". Why should I have to get a permit to park in front of my house, that I bought. That the stupidest thing I ever heard.

6. What do you think about having a residential permit parking program in your neighborhood?

Question 6 Results: Yes = 7, No = 7, No response = 2

Question 6 Response:

- Sound interesting.
- I don't think it would work.
- Not the answer.
- Permit parking would work if area employees had adequate parking and patients etc. had a two-hour limit.
- If there has to be a parking solution that would be the best way, to have all vehicles licensed to your address, have a parking sticker. We have five drivers and two homes on site.
- Permit parking sounds like a solution.
- I like that.
- Awful-not fair to residential property owners.
- Not needed.
- Option C.
- No permit program.
- Would be good so people could park where they live.

- You mean to say, I would have to have a permit to park in front of my own house. God, that's our city government at its finest.

7. Are you in favor of signage for limited 2-hour parking (from 9am-6pm) in front of businesses?

Question 7 Results: Yes = 5, No = 6, Maybe = 2, No response = 3

Additional Response to entire survey:

- Option C sounds interesting. My law office is at 102 5th St. NE. Post office employees begin early & park all day along my property. The people who come to see me are rarely here longer than ½ hour. Most are stopping by to deliver or pick up docs & parking is an issue.
- Residents should have their own off street parking. Residents are territorial about street parking in front of their homes which isn't theirs.
- Option A. The more rules there are, the more people will find ways around them creating bigger problems.
- Permits would be ok; but no one expects employees in the area to move their vehicles every 2 hours/ maybe paid parking on the streets like Seattle area hospital zones.
- I don't drive, but I know a lot of neighbors that get mad when they leave the house and when they get back and they end up parking a block away because the space is gone.
- 500 block of A Street NE does not have a maintained alley, so backyard alley parking is not an option for us like the other three blocks. Therefore street parking is a must since we have a RV in our driveway!
- Post office employees use all street parking on A NW.
- We must protect residential property owners, for preferred parking while letting the hospital area grow intelligently.
- The semi-truck traffic using the neighborhood streets needs to be addressed. There are a number of young families with children in this neighborhood, therefore using these streets as a "truck route" is not appropriate.
- Would like his properties removed from overlay plan.
- It's not broke, don't fix it or let postal workers have a permit to park in hospital parking. Those spaces are never filled anyway.

PARKING OPTIONS GIVEN (north of 3rd Street NE):

A) Retain **72 HOUR PARKING RESTRICTION** throughout the neighborhood with no change to the current on-street parking requirements. (Auburn Code Section 10.36.260)

B) Implement maximum **TWO HOUR ON-STREET PARKING** restriction throughout the neighborhood Monday through Friday 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. (Auburn Code Section 10.36.390)

C) In addition to the Two-Hour On-Street Parking restriction, implement a **PERMIT PARKING ZONE** throughout the entire neighborhood Monday through Friday 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. This will limit parking to residents and their guests during specified hours by obtaining a permit from the City. Permits would likely be issued based on verification of driver's license and vehicle registration by address or other acceptable information to determine residency. The specific policy for the permit program including visitor parking are to be determined by the City.

Community Services Team Contact Information:

- Duanna Richards, Community Services Manager, 253-931-3099 or drichards@auburnwa.gov
- Kirsten Reynolds, Community Services Project Assistant, 253-876-1964, or kreynolds@auburnwa.gov